Literacy Projects Receive Assistance

Department of Education

News Releases

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Eleven Nova Scotia family literacy projects are the most recent beneficiaries of the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund.

Hugh Smith, president of the Halifax Youth Foundation, and Jane Purves, Minister of Education, announced that 11 separate projects will receive a total of $61,000 to promote learning and literacy to Nova Scotia families.

"We are pleased to support some very creative approaches to literacy development in Nova Scotia," said Ms. Purves. "These projects promise to engage all family members, in a variety of family situations, in this important lifelong learning process."

The projects funded this year are located across the province and include: a program for First Nations parents and children using rhymes, songs and stories; a project encouraging the role of fathers in the development of their child's learning; and a program aimed at increasing the confidence of Grade 5 students and their parents in the use of the French language.

"We believe that investing in children is investing in our future," said Mr. Smith. "These projects bring reading and writing home, and for this reason they are receiving our support."

The Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund, launched last year, was established by the Halifax Youth Foundation with funding from the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada, and the departments of Community Services and Education. The Department of Education provides administrative support to the fund by co-ordinating the grant application and review process, and overseeing project monitoring.

The first of its kind in Canada, the fund provides grants to organizations that encourage families to foster learning environments at home, and support parents and children in their personal educational goals.

Family literacy is part of Nova Scotia's comprehensive approach to developing literacy at all levels -- in the early years, through the public school system, and through adult programs such as workplace literacy, Adult Basic Education and community-based literacy programs. This year, the Department of Education is investing an additional $1.5 million in public school initiatives aimed at improving early literacy in young children.

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FOR BROADCAST USE:

Eleven family literacy projects across Nova Scotia are getting grants to promote reading and writing at home.

They will share 61-thousand dollars in funding from the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund, a partnership of the Halifax Youth Foundation and the federal and provincial governments.

The projects will encourage learning at home and support parents and children in their personal educational goals.

Education Minister Jane Purves says the projects are creative and should engage all family members in learning.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: A list of the projects, and a brief description of each, appears below.

2000-01 Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund Projects

Cape Breton Literacy Network Association: Cape Breton Literacy Network Book Bag Project

This project will assist parents/grandparents to develop the necessary skills to properly select and read children's stories and carry out appropriate follow-up activities. As well, book bags will be developed that will contain a selection of children's stories with a common theme and plain language directions, and/or materials necessary for appropriate follow-up activities.

Le Centre préscolaire de la Baie Sainte-Marie: Le théâtre: Initiative d'alphabétisation

Through the facilitation and presentation of a play involving children in Grade 5 at the École Joseph Dugas and their parents, participants will develop their reading and writing skills in addition to developing confidence in using French in front of many people.

Community Literacy and Support Services (Shelburne): Family Literacy Services for Western Shelburne County

Through the hiring of a part-time co-ordinator, this project aims to create a framework of literacy-based programs to be sustained within the community to promote the importance of family learning.

Dartmouth Family Resource Centre: Sharing the Magic

This project will provide a literacy awareness program for young, single parents. Through a variety of activities, parents will explore their feelings and attitudes about their children's learning process. They will experience the pleasures and benefits of engaging in literacy activities with their children and will expand these opportunities to the home environment.

Debert Military Family Resource Centre: Family Treasure Boxes

This project plans to provide materials called Family Treasure Boxes to support in-home family learning. Each box will consist of reading materials for different ages, games, craft suggestions and discussion guides on a number of different themes. Parents will help develop the themes and suggest the contents of the boxes and then pilot the boxes in their own homes.

Family Matters-Annapolis County Family Resource Centre: Just Me and My Dad

This project will encourage the positive role of fathers in the development of their child's learning and growth. Fathers will be provided with the opportunity to be more active in their child's learning and create a healthy bonding experience for both the parent and the child. Fathers will be provided with resources, supplies and materials to enable healthy bonding opportunities.

Family Resource Centre of West Hants: Step Up to School

This program will offer an opportunity for children and their parents to attend sessions to prepare for school entry. Adults and children will take part in separate, but related, learning experiences for half the time and will also join together for

shared time. Children will be provided with enriched early learning experiences. In addition, a working partnership with community agencies will be developed to involve parents in the development of skills required to assist their children in stepping up to school.

Pictou County Continuous Learning Association: Family Learning Program

The goal of this project is to offer adult academic upgrading to parents of children from Pictou schools. This program will prepare the preschool children for school and indirectly assist school-age children by helping the parents become proactive and knowledgeable regarding their children's education at home and at school.

Queens Family Resource Centre and Queens Learning Network: Parent Support

This project will introduce a parent-support component to enhance a currently running academic upgrading program. Using parenting issues and materials, literacy skills will be developed while parents and facilitators explore and exchange information on topics relevant to parental roles. The parents will also learn how to help their children succeed in school.

Shubenacadie Band Council and Indian Brook First Nation: Indian Brook Parent-Child Mother Goose Program

This program will offer First Nation parents, their babies and young children, an activity-based group experience focussing on the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs and stories together.

South Centennial Literacy Program (Yarmouth): South Centennial Literacy Program

This proposal seeks to involve the family unit through shared learning experiences and literacy activities. In addition to providing support groups for parents, this project will provide parents an opportunity to develop literacy, numeracy and social skills through small group settings, or one-to-one, based on individual need.

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